

Nominal structures in object position
(General Introduction to the properties w01 a/b/c(d)-w06 a/b/c).
June 2014.
Cristina Guardiano and Hilda Koopman

1. General introduction, organization of the property definition, definition of bare noun phrase, and how to proceed most efficiently.

The properties w01 to w06 probe for a particular set of phenomena related to nominal structures.

The properties are organized around the following variables:

1. indefinite vs. definite reading of noun phrases
2. generic reading of noun phrases
3. mass vs. count (singular vs. plural) nouns
4. syntactic position: object vs. subject (*only the object properties have been posted so far (June 15, 2014 ; the subject properties are ready, and will be posted in mid July weeks.)*)

In particular, we are interested in whether a noun, according to each of the variables 1-4 above:

- a) can be "bare" (i.e. lack an "article"), or
- b) must have an "article", or
- c) can have an "article" (i.e. can either be bare or occur with an article)

This gives rise to 18 different properties for objects, organized in the following fashion:

(w01_) Indefinite mass nouns in object position...

- a. ...can be bare
- b. ...must have an article
- c. ...can have an article

(w02_) definite mass nouns in object position....

- A...can be bare
- b. ...must have an article
- c. ...can have an article

...and so forth.

These properties apply to:

- unmodified nouns (NO quantifiers, adjectives, possessors, relative clauses, adpositional complements ...)
- objects in affirmative sentences (NO negative, interrogative, passive...)

Organization of each property definition.

- Definition of the property
- elicitation context(s) [[use them](#)]
- instructions [[follow them](#)]
- examples of languages on how the properties should be set. ([read these!](#))

[Languages that exemplify certain

"Bare " nouns and "articles"

We need to define, for comparative purposes, what counts as "bare", and what counts (and what does not count) as an "article."

For the purposes of this set of properties, we define what counts as "bare" as follows (this is repeated and

slightly adjusted in each property definition):

A bare noun phrase....

- (i) for languages with *definite/indefinite articles, specificity markers, definite/indefinite affixes...*): lacks an “article”
- (ii) for languages without *articles* but with *classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings ...*): exhibits no structural alternation with noun phrases of a particular type ([as defined and illustrated in each property definition](#))

How to proceed most efficiently.

Until we are ready to migrate to terraling, with a more friendly user interface, we have found learned from experience that the most efficient way to proceed for these properties is the following mixture of on-line and offline activities :

Preparation: Estimated time 20-30 minutes.

1. read each group of property definitions (a,b and c (d)) [on line or if you have difficult access to the net in the off-line pdf document: INSERT LINK, which is harder to read]
2. for each, construct the relevant examples, glosses, translations: type these off-line.
[An excel sheet has been prepared for this purpose: it can be found on line. ++PASTE LINK \(or in a word/text/pdf able document: make sure fonts will show up correctly, test it out\)](#)
3. decide the property values, ([in excel sheet](#))
4. add comments, where necessary and informative ([in excel sheet](#))

Entering the data into the database:

5. Login and enter all the property values from your excel file into the sswl site: *max 5 minutes* (you can do this after each group of a,b,c) or after all properties)
6. Add your examples (cut and paste) into the database. (*approx 30 seconds per example*).

If you have done the task, but have trouble entering the data by yourself, or get frustrated (the interface in Teraling will be very user friendly), please ask us for help: we will try to take care of it in your name.

Comments, feedback, improvements, suggestions for further follow up questions, all welcome.

Best wishes,

Cristina G and Hilda K.
June 2014.

w01

Indefinite mass nouns in object position

To code for all possibilities, and for ease of the task, there are **three** property definitions for indefinite mass nouns in object position:
can be bare, must have an article, can have an article

w01a_Indefinite mass nouns in object position can be *bare*

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **indefinite**<glossary link> **mass** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> can be "bare".

A bare noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties,

- (i) lacks an "article" (e.g. an 'indefinite' or a 'partitive' article, i.e. English *of+art*, French *de+art*, Italian *di+art*, etc)
- (ii) (*for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings...*) exhibits no **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular or plural count noun, or
 - (b) a definite mass noun

Elicitation context

I drink _____ water every day

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) (a) *I bought _____ wine* (first mention of *wine*, non specific)
- (b) *The wind blew _____ sand on my terrace* (first mention of *sand*, non specific)
- (c) *John drank _____ milk for breakfast*
- (2) (a) *John produces _____ olive oil on his farm*
- (b) *Mary is eating _____ cheese*
- (c) *John sells _____ beer*

Additional instructions

- This property applies to mass nouns (*I drank beer*), NOT to mass nouns used as count nouns (*I drank a beer/two beers/three beers* = it can only mean *a glass of beer, a type of beer...*)
- The mass noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is **affirmative**, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

English is "yes" for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) (a) I bought wine
- (b) The wind blew sand on my terrace
- (c) John drank milk for breakfast

- (ii) (a) John produces olive oil in his farm
- (b) Mary is eating cheese
- (c) John sells beer

2.

Russian is “yes” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position can be bare (i.a). The contrast between (i.a) and (i.b) shows that a mass noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite (i.a) and a definite interpretation (i.b), thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) Ja dostala vino i syr iz xolodil'nika
I take.out.PST.SG.FEM wine.ACC and cheese from fridge
I took wine and cheese from the fridge.
- (b) Ja doela syr, no ne smogla dopit' vino
I eat.PST cheese.ACC but NEG could drink.up.INF wine.ACC
I ate the cheese but I wasn't able to drink the wine

3.

Hebrew is “yes” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) axalti basar
late meat
I ate meat

4.

Italian is “yes” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) (a) Mario ha bevuto birra alla festa
Mario drank beer at the party
- (b) Gianni sta mangiando formaggio
John is eating cheese

5.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position can never be bare.

- (i) *ardo edan dut
wine drink AUX
I drank wine

An “article” (a) is obligatory.

- (ii) ardo-a edan dut
wine-A drink AUX
I drank wine (it can also mean I drank the wine)

6.

French is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position can never be bare.

- (i) *Jean buvait bière
John drank beer

The “partitive” article (= the preposition *de* + the *definite* article) is obligatory.

- (ii) Jean buvait de la bière
John drank of the beer
John drank beer

w01b_ Indefinite mass nouns in object position must have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified<glossary link> indefinite<glossary link> mass <glossary link> noun** in **object position <glossary link>** must:

- (i) occur with an "article" (e.g. an 'indefinite' or a 'partitive' article, i.e. English *of+art*, French *de+art*, Italian *di+art*, etc)
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings...) exhibits **structural<glossary link>** alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular or plural count noun, or
 - (b) a definite mass noun.

Elicitation context

I drink _____ water every day

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) (a) *I bought _____ wine* (first mention of *wine*, non specific)
- (b) *The wind blew _____ sand on my terrace* (first mention of *sand*, non specific)
- (c) *John drank _____ milk for breakfast*
- (2) (a) *John produces _____ olive oil on his farm*
- (b) *Mary is eating _____ cheese*
- (c) *John sells _____ beer*

Additional instructions

- This property applies to mass nouns (*I drank beer*), NOT to mass nouns used as count nouns (*I drank a beer/two beers/three beers* = it can only mean *a glass of beer, a type of beer...*)
- The mass noun must be unmodified (**no quantifiers**, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

French is "yes" for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position must have an *article* (= the preposition *de* + the *definite* article).

- (i) (a) Jean buvait de la bière
John drank of the beer
John drank (some) beer
- (b) *Jean buvait bière
John drank beer

2.

Basque is “yes” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position must have the “article” *a*.

- (i) (b) ardo-a edan dut
wine-A drink AUX
I drank wine (it can also mean *I drank the wine*)
(a) *ardo edan dut
wine drink AUX
I drank wine

3.

English is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position do not need to have an article.

- (i) I bought wine
(ii) The wind blew sand on my terrace
(iii) John drank milk for breakfast

4.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position do not need to have an article.

- (i) axalti basar
I ate meat
I ate meat

5.

Italian is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position do not need to have an article.

- (i) Mario ha bevuto birra alla festa
Mario drank beer at the party
(ii) Gianni sta mangiando formaggio
John is eating cheese

6.

Russian is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position do not need to have an article (i.a).

The contrast between (i.a) and (i.b) shows that a mass noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite (i.a) and a definite interpretation (i.b), thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) Ja dostala vino i syr iz xolodil'nika.
I take.out.PST-SG.FEM wine.ACC and cheese from fridge
I took wine and cheese from the fridge.
(b) Ja doela syr, no ne smogla dopit' vino
I eat.PST cheese.ACC but NEG could drink.up.INF wine.ACC
I ate the cheese but I wasn't able to drink the wine

w01c_Indefinite mass nouns in object position can have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified<glossary link> indefinite<glossary link> mass<glossary link> noun** in **object <glossary link>** position can (but does not have to):

- (i) occur with an "article" (e.g. an 'indefinite' or a 'partitive' article, i.e. English *of+art*, French *de+art*, Italian *di+art*, etc)
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings...) exhibit **structural<glossary link>** alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular or plural count noun, or
 - (b) a definite mass noun.

Elicitation context

I drink _____ water every day

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) (a) *I bought _____ wine* (first mention of *wine*, non specific)
- (b) *The wind blew _____ sand on my terrace* (first mention of *sand*, non specific)
- (c) *John drank _____ milk for breakfast*
- (2) (a) *John produces _____ olive oil on his farm*
- (b) *Mary is eating _____ cheese*
- (c) *John sells _____ beer*

Additional instructions

- This property applies to mass nouns (*I drank beer*), NOT to mass nouns used as count nouns (*I drank a beer/two beers/three beers* = it can only mean *a glass of beer, a type of beer...*)
- The mass noun must be unmodified (**no quantifiers**, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

Russian is "yes" for this property.

Indefinite mass nouns can have partitive case (PRT), which counts as an article (i.a, ii.a), or the accusative case, which counts as bare (i.b, ii.b).

- (i) (a) ja s.jel mjaso
I.NOM eat.PFV-SG.MASC.PST meat.PRT.SG
I ate some meat
- (b) ja s.jel mjaso
I.NOM eat.PFV-SG.MASC.PST meat.ACC.SG
I ate meat (all of it)

Comment: Partitive is ungrammatical with imperfective *jel*

- (ii) (a) ja nalila sebe chaju
I.NOM pfv.POUR.FEM.SG.PST self.DAT tea.PRT.SG
I poured myself (some) tea
- (b) ja nalila sebe chaj-∅
I.NOM pfv.POUR.FEM.SG.PST self.DAT tea-ACC.SG
I poured myself tea

2.

Italian is “yes” for this property.

Indefinite mass nouns in object position can have an article (the preposition *di* followed by the definite article = *partitive* article; i) or be bare (ii).

- (i) (a) Mario ha bevuto birra alla festa
Mario drank beer at the part
- (b) Gianni sta mangiando formaggio
John is eating cheese
- (ii) (b) Mario ha comprato della birra
Mario bought some beer
- (b) Gianni sta mangiando del formaggio
John is eating some cheese

3.

English is “no” for this property.

Indefinite mass nouns in object position can be bare (i.a, ii.a, iii.a) or occur with the quantifier *some* (i.b, ii.b, iii.b). *Some* is not an article.

- (i) (a) I bought wine
(b) I bought some wine
(c) *I bought of the wine
(d) *I bought wine.GEN
- (ii) (a) The wind blew sand on my terrace
(b) The wind blew some sand on my terrace
(c) *The wind blew of the sand on my terrace
(d) *The wind blew sand.GEN on my terrace
- (iii) (a) John drank milk for breakfast
(b) John drank some milk for breakfast
(c) *John drank of the milk for breakfast
(d) * John drank milk.GEN for breakfast

4.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position do not have any article.

- (i) axalti basar
I.ate meat
I ate meat

5.

French is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position must have an article (= the preposition *de* + the *definite* article).

- (i) (a) *Jean buvait bière
John drank beer
(b) Jean buvait de la bière
John drank (some) beer

6.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite mass nouns in object position must have the “article” *a*.

- (i) (a) *ardo edan dut
wine drink AUX
I drank wine
(b) ardo-a edan dut
wine-A drink AUX
I drank wine (it can also mean I drank the wine)

Definite mass nouns in object position

To code for all possibilities, and for ease of the task, there are three property definitions for definite mass nouns in object position:
can be bare, must have an article, can have an article

w03a_Definite mass nouns in object position can be *bare*

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> **mass** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> can be "bare".

A bare noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties:

- (i) lacks an "**article**" <glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings ...) exhibits no **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite mass noun, or
 - (b) a definite singular or plural count noun

Elicitation context

Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:

Please, put ____ milk in the fridge!

Good answer in English: *please, put **the** milk in the fridge (the milk is definite)*

Infelicitous answer in English: *please, put **some** milk in the fridge (some milk is indefinite)*

Infelicitous answer in English: *please, put **milk** in the fridge (milk is indefinite)*

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table.
Speaker A says:
Pass me ____ water!

Additional instructions

- The mass noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

Russian is "yes" for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position can be bare (i.b).

The contrast between (i.a) and (i.b) shows that a mass noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite (i.a) and a definite interpretation (i.b), thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) Ja dostala vino i syr iz xolodil'nika
 I take.out.PST.SG.FEM wine.ACC and cheese from fridge
I took wine and cheese from the fridge.
- (b) Ja doela syr, no ne smogla dopit' vino
 I eat.PST cheese.ACC but NEG could drink.up.INF wine.ACC
I ate the cheese but I wasn't able to drink the wine

2.

English is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position can not be bare.

- (i) (a) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table. Speaker A says:*
 *Pass me water!
- (b) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:*
 *Put milk in the fridge!

The definite article “the” is obligatory.

- (ii) (a) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table. Speaker A says:*
 Pass me the water!
- (b) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:*
 Put the milk in the fridge!

3.

Basque is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position can not be bare.

- (i) *ardo edan dut
 wine drink AUX

The “article” *a* (i.b) is obligatory.

- (ii) ardo-a edan dut
 wine-A drink AUX
I drank the wine (it can also mean I drank wine)

4.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position can not be bare.

- (i) axalti basar
 I-ate meat
I ate meat (cannot mean I ate the meat)

The definite article *ha-* (i.b) is obligatory.

- (ii) axalti et ha-basar
 I-ate ACC the-meat
I ate the meat

w03b_ Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> **mass** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> must:

- (i) occur with an **"article"** <glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, adpositional endings, case) exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing: (a) an indefinite mass noun, and/or (b) a definite singular or plural count noun

Elicitation context

Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:

Please, put ____ milk in the fridge!

Good answer in English: *please, put **the** milk in the fridge* (*the milk* is definite)

Infelicitous answer in English: *please, put **some** milk in the fridge* (*some milk* is indefinite)

Infelicitous answer in English: *please, put **milk** in the fridge* (*milk* is indefinite)

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table.
Speaker A says:
Pass me ____ water!

Additional instructions

- The mass noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

English is "yes" for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) (a) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table. Speaker A says:*
Pass me the water!
- (b) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:*
Put the milk in the fridge!

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table. Speaker A says:*
**Pass me water!*

- (b) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:*
 *Put milk in the fridge!

2.

Basque is “yes” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) ardo-a edan dut
 wine-A drink AUX
 Can mean both *I drank the wine* and *I drank wine*

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) *ardo edan dut
 wine drink AUX
I drank wine

3.

Hebrew is “yes” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) axalti et ha-basar
 I-ate ACC the-meat
I ate the meat

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) axalti basar
 I-ate meat
I ate meat (cannot mean I ate the meat)

4.

Russian is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position do not have an article (i.b). The contrast between (i.a) and (i.b) shows that a mass noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite (i.a) and an definite interpretation (i.b), thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) Ja dostala vino i syr iz xolodil'nika
 I take.out.PST.SG.FEM wine.ACC and cheese from fridge
I took wine and cheese from the fridge.
- (b) Ja doela syr, no ne smogla dopit' vino
 I eat.PST cheese.ACC but NEG could drink.up.INF wine.ACC
I ate the cheese but I wasn't able to drink the wine

w03bc_

Definite mass nouns in object position can have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> **mass** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> can (but does not have to):

- (i) occur with an "article" <glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, adpositional endings, case) exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite mass noun, and/or
 - (b) a definite singular or plural count noun

Elicitation context

Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:

Please, put ____ milk in the fridge!

Good answer in English: *please, put **the** milk in the fridge* (*the milk* is definite)

Infelicitous answer in English: *please, put **some** milk in the fridge* (*some milk* is indefinite)

Infelicitous answer in English: *please, put **milk** in the fridge* (*milk* is indefinite)

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table.
Speaker A says:
Pass me ____ water!

Additional instructions

- The mass noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

No known cases of "yes", yet.

1.

English is "no" for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) (a) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table. Speaker A says:*
Pass me the water!
- (b) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:*
Put the milk in the fridge!

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are having dinner. There is water and cheese on the table. Speaker A says:*
*Pass me water!
- (b) Context: *Speaker A and speaker B are back from the supermarket. Speaker A says:*
*Put milk in the fridge!

2.

Basque is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) ardo-a edan dut
wine-A drink AUX
Can mean both *I drank the wine* and *I drank wine*

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) *ardo edan dut
wine drink AUX
I drank wine

3.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) axalti et ha-basar
I-ate ACC the-meat
I ate the meat

Bare mass nouns in object position are never definite.

- (ii) axalti basar
I-ate meat
I ate meat (cannot mean *I ate the meat*)

4.

Russian is “no” for this property. Definite mass nouns in object position do not have an article. The contrast between (i.a) and (i.b) shows that a mass noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite (i.a) and a definite interpretation (i.b), thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) Ja dostala vino i syr iz xolodil'nik
I take.out.PST.SG.FEM wine.ACC and cheese from fridge
I took wine and cheese from the fridge.
- (b) Ja doela syr, no ne smogla dopit' vino
I eat.PST cheese.ACC but NEG could drink.up.INF wine.ACC
I ate the cheese but I wasn't able to drink the wine

Indefinite singular count nouns in object position

To code for all possibilities, and for ease of the task, there are three property definitions for indefinite singular count nouns in object position: can be bare, must have an article, can have an article,

Plus an additional one:

Indefinite singular count nouns in object position may have a plural-like reading

w03a_

Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can be *bare*

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **indefinite**<glossary link> morphologically singular **count** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> can be "bare".

A bare noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties,

- (i) lacks an "article" (e.g. an *indefinite* article, the numeral 'one')
- (ii) (*for languages without indefinite articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...*) exhibits no **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) a definite singular count noun in object position, or
 - (b) an indefinite plural noun in object position

Elicitation context

Yesterday I bought ___ book (first mention of *book*, singular, non-specific)

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Further contexts to set this property

- (1) (a) *Yesterday I met ___ student* (first mention of *student*, singular, non-specific)
(b) *Yesterday I saw ___ dog in my garden* (first mention of *dog*, singular, non-specific)
- (2) (a) *I want to buy ___ car, but I haven't found one, yet*
(b) *I want to hire ___ secretary, but I haven't found one, yet*
(c) *Mario wants to buy ___ computer, but he doesn't know which one*
- (3) We know that Joseph is going to marry Susan, who is an actress
Joseph wants to marry ___ actress
- (4) (a) *That poison can kill ___ elephant in less than five minutes*
(b) *John can sell ___ bike in five minutes*

Additional instructions

- The indefinite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)

- singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
- *home*

Examples

1.

Hebrew is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare.

(i) karati sefer
I.read book
I read a book

(ii) pagashti ish
I.met man
I met a man

(iii) raiti kelev
I.saw dog
I saw a dog

2.

Hindi is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare.

(i) māñe kitaab padhii (**the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D**)
I.ERG book read.PAST.FEM
I read a book

3.

Hungarian is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare.

(i) olvastam könyvet
read.1SG book.ACC
I read a book

(ii) látok kutyát
see.PRST.1SG.INDEF dog.ACC
I see a dog

4.

Wolof is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare (i) (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann 2013: 904, ex 32b).

(i) Xadi gis-na sàcc
Xadi see-FIN thief
Xadi saw a thief

Comment: a specific interpretation (e.g. *a certain thief*) is also possible.

5.

Mandarin Chinese is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare (Cheng& Sybesma 1999: 510, ex 1a).

(i) Hufei mai shu qu le

Hufei buy book go SFP
Hufey went to buy a book

6.

Russian is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare (ia). A singular count noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met a dog (can also mean I met the dog)
- (b) ja pročitala knigu
I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read a book (can also mean I read the book)
- (c) ja vstretil učitelja
I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met a teacher (can also mean I met the teacher)

7.

Modern Greek is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular (non specific) count nouns in object position can be bare (cf. Alexopoulou and Folli 2011)

- (i) diávasa vivlío
read.PAST.3SG book
I read a book (non specific only)

8.

English is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position are never bare (i.a, ii.a and iii.a): they require the *indefinite* article ‘a’ (i.b, ii.b, iii.b).

- (i) (a) *I met dog
(b) I met a dog
- (ii) (a) *I read book
(b) I read a book
- (iii) (a) * I met teacher
(b) I met a teacher

9.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can not be bare.

- (i) * liburu irakurri dut
book read T.AUX.1S

They require an indefinite article *bat* ‘one’, which is homophonous with the numeral for ‘one’.

- (ii) liburu bat irakurri dut
book one read T.AUX.1S
I read a book

w03b_

Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **indefinite**<glossary link> morphologically singular **count** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link>, must:

- (i) occur with an "article" (e.g. the *indefinite* article, the numeral 'one')
- (ii) (*for languages without indefinite articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...*) exhibits **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) a definite singular count noun in object position, or
 - (b) an indefinite plural noun in object position

Elicitation context

Yesterday I bought ____ book (first mention of *book*, singular, non-specific)

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Further contexts to set this property

- (1) (a) *Yesterday I met ____ student* (first mention of *student*, singular, non-specific)
(b) *Yesterday I saw ____ dog in my garden* (first mention of *dog*, singular, non-specific)
- (2) (a) *I want to buy ____ car, but I haven't found one, yet*
(b) *I want to hire ____ secretary, but I haven't found one, yet*
(c) *Mario wants to buy ____ computer, but he doesn't know which one*
- (3) We know that Joseph is going to marry Susan, who is an actress
Joseph wants to marry ____ actress
- (4) (a) *That poison can kill ____ elephant in less than five minutes*
(b) *John can sell ____ bike in five minutes*

Additional instructions

- The indefinite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

English is "yes" for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must have an *indefinite* article.

- (i) (a) I met a dog
(b) I read a book
(c) I met a teacher

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) *I met dog
- (b) *I read book
- (c) * I met teacher

2.

Basque is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must have an indefinite article *bat* ‘one’ which is homophonous to the numeral for ‘one’.

- (i) liburu bat irakurri dut
book one read T.AUX.1S

They cannot be bare

- (ii) * liburu irakurri dut
book read T.AUX.1S
I read a book

3.

Modern Greek is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can be bare (cf. Alexopoulou and Folli 2011).

- (i) diávasa vivlío
read.PAST.3SG book
I read a book (non specific only)

4.

Hindi is “no” for this property. Indefinite count singular nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) māñne kitaab padhii **(the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D)**
I.ERG book read.PST.FEM
I read a book

5.

Hungarian is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can be bare (cf. also de Swart and Farkas 2005).

- (i) egész délután könyvet olvastam
whole afternoon book.ACC read.PST.1SG
Meaning: *I read books all afternoon long*

- (ii) lát-ok kutyá-t.
see.PRST.1SG.INDEF dog.ACC
I see a dog (can also mean *I see dogs*)

6.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can be bare (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann 2013: 904, ex 32).

- (i) Xadi gis-na sàcc
Xadi see-FIN thief
Xadi saw a thief

Comment: a specific interpretation (e.g. *a certain thief*) is also possible.

7.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position are bare.

(i) karati sefer
I.read book
I read a book

(ii) pagashti ish
I.met man
I met a man

(iii) raiti kelev
I.saw dog
I saw a dog

8.

Russian is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position are bare. A singular count noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

(i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met a dog (can also mean I met the dog)

(b) ja pročitala knigu
I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read a book (can also mean I read the book)

(c) ja vstretil učitelja
I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met a teacher (can also mean I met the teacher)

w03c_

Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **indefinite**<glossary link> morphologically singular **count** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link>, can:

- (i) occur with an "article" (e.g. the *indefinite* article, the numeral 'one')
- (ii) (*for languages without indefinite articles but with classifiers, noun classes case, adpositional endings, ...*) exhibits **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) a definite singular count noun in object position, or
 - (b) an indefinite plural noun in object position

Elicitation context

Yesterday I bought ____ book (first mention of *book*, singular, non-specific)

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Further contexts to set this property

- (1) (a) *Yesterday I met ____ student* (first mention of *student*, singular, non-specific)
(b) *Yesterday I saw ____ dog in my garden* (first mention of *dog*, singular, non-specific)
- (2) (a) *I want to buy ____ car, but I haven't found one, yet*
(b) *I want to hire ____ secretary, but I haven't found one, yet*
(c) *Mario wants to buy ____ computer, but he doesn't know which one*
- (3) We know that Joseph is going to marry Susan, who is an actress
Joseph wants to marry ____ actress
- (4) (a) *That poison can kill ____ elephant in less than five minutes*
(b) *John can sell ____ bike in five minutes*

Additional instructions

- The indefinite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

Modern Greek is "yes" for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position may have an *indefinite* article (i.a), but can also be bare (i.b) (cf. Alexopoulou and Folli 2011).

- (i) (a) *diávasa ena vivlío*
read.PAST.3SG one book
I read a book (can either be specific or not)

- (b) diávasa vivlío
 read.PAST.3SG book
I read a book (non specific only)

2.

Wolof is “yes” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position can either be bare (i.a) or occur with indefinite markers (i.b and c; Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann 2013: 904, ex 32).

- (i) (a) Xadi gis-na sàcc
 Xadi see-FIN thief
Xadi saw a thief/a certain thief
- (b) Xadi gis-na a-b sàcc
 Xadi see-FIN INDEF-CL thief
Xadi saw a thief
- (c) Xadi gis-na b-enn sàcc
 Xadi see-FIN CL-one thief
Xadi saw a certain thief

3.

English is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must have an *indefinite* article.

- (i) (a) I met a dog
 (b) I read a book
 (c) I met a teacher

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) *I met dog
 (b) *I read book
 (c) * I met teacher

4.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must have an indefinite article *bat* ‘one’, homophonous with the numeral for ‘one’.

- (i) liburu bat irakurri dut
 book one read T.AUX.1S

They cannot be bare

- (ii) * liburu irakurri dut
 book read T.AUX.1S
I read a book

4.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position are bare.

- (i) karati sefer
 I.read book
I read a book
- (ii) pagashti ish
 I.met man
I met a man

(iii) raiti kelev
I.saw dog
I saw a dog

8.

Russian is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position are bare. A singular count noun with accusative case is compatible with both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

(i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met a dog (can also mean I met the dog)

(b) ja pročitala knigu
I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read a book (can also mean I read the book)

(c) ja vstretil učitelja
I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met a teacher (can also mean I met the teacher)

w03d_

Indefinite singular count nouns in object position may have a plural-like reading

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified<glossary link> indefinite<glossary link> bare<popup window>** singular **count <glossary link>** noun in **object <glossary link>** position may be ambiguous between a singular and a plural-like reading.

FEEDBACK PARTICULARLY APPRECIATED!

BARE<popup window>

A **bare** noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties,

- (i) lacks an "article" (e.g. an indefinite article, the numeral 'one')
- (ii) (*for languages without indefinite articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...*)
exhibits no **structural<glossary link>** alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) a definite singular count nouns in object position, or
 - (b) an indefinite plural noun in object position

Elicitation context

- (1) *David sells **book** for a living*
- (2) *I went to a party to meet **girl***
- (3) *At the zoo, the children watched **elephant** all afternoon long*

Additional instructions

- The indefinite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

Hindi is "yes" for this property. Bare indefinite count singular nouns in object position may be ambiguous between a singular and a "plural-like" reading (i) (Dayal 1992).

- (i) māīne kitaab padhii (**the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D**)
I.ERG book read.PST.FEM
I read a book / some books (can mean either one or more than one book)

There is no ambiguity if the noun is marked as a plural (ii.a) or combines with the numeral "one" (ek; ii.b).

- (ii) (a) māīne kitaabē padhii (**the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D**)
I.ERG book.PL read.PST.FEM
I read books (must be more than one book)
- (b) māīne ek kitab padhii (**the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D**)
I.ERG one book read.PST.FEM
I read a book (must be a singular book)

2.

Hungarian is “yes” for this property. Bare indefinite count singular nouns in object position may be ambiguous between a singular and a “plural-like” reading (cf. also de Swart and Farkas 2005).

- (i) (a) egész délután könyvet olvastam
whole afternoon book.ACC read.PST.1SG
lit. I read a book whole afternoon
I read books all afternoon long (there can be one or many books)
- (b) látok kutyát.
see.PRST.1SG.INDEF dog.ACC
lit. I see a dog
I see dogs (there can be one or many dogs)

There is no ambiguity if the noun is marked as a plural (ii) or combines with the numeral “one” (*egy*; iii).

- (ii) (a) olvastam könyveket
read.1SG book.PL.ACC
I read books (there must be more than one book)
- (b) olvastam egy könyvet
read.1SG one book.ACC
I read one (single) book
- (iii) (a) láttam kutyákat
see.PST.1SG dog.PL.ACC
I see dogs (there must be more than one dog)
- (b) látok egy kutyát
see.PRST.1SG.INDEF one dog.ACC
I see a (single) dog

3.

English is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position always require an *indefinite* article and must be interpreted as singular.

- (i) (a) I met a dog
(b) I read a book
(c) I met a teacher

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) *I met dog
(b) *I read book
(c) * I met teacher

4.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position always require an *indefinite* article *bat* and must be interpreted as singular.

- (i) liburu bat irakurri dut
book one read T.AUX.1S

They cannot be bare

- (ii) * liburu irakurri dut
 book read T.AUX.1S
I read a book

5.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must be interpreted as singular. (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann 2013: 905, ex 33).

- (i) (a) Awa jàpp-na sàcc
 Awa catch-FIN thief
Awa caught a thief (cannot mean *Awa caught thieves*)
 (b) Awa jàpp-na a-y sàcc
 Awa catch-FIN INDEF-CL.PL thief
Awa caught some thieves

6.

Modern Greek is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must be interpreted as singular. (Alexopoulou and Folli 2011).

- (i) diávasa vivlío
 read.PAST.3SG book
I read a book (cannot be interpreted as plural: *books*)

7.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must be interpreted as singular.

- (i) karati sefer
 I.read book
I read a book (cannot mean *I read books*)

- (ii) pagashti ish
 I.met man
I met a man (cannot mean *I met men*)

- (iii) raiti kelev
 I.saw dog
I saw a dog (cannot mean *I saw dogs*)

8.

Russian is “no” for this property. Indefinite singular count nouns in object position must be interpreted as singular.

- (i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
 I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met a dog (can also mean *I met the dog*)
 (b) ja pročitala knigu
 I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read a book (can also mean *I read the book*)
 (c) ja vstretil učitelja
 I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met a teacher (can also mean *I met the teacher*)

Definite singular count nouns in object position

To code for all possibilities, and for ease of the task, there are three property definitions for definite singular count nouns in object position:
can be bare, must have an article, can have an article

w04a_

Definite singular count nouns in object position can be *bare*

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> singular **count** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> can be "bare" at least in the following context:

I met two boys and a girl. I called ___ girl

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) A book and a pen were on the table.
I took ___ book, but I left ___ pen
- (2) Yesterday the sky was clear
we watched _____ moon through a telescope
- (3) *Please, clean _____ bathroom before you leave*
- (4) My new neighbors are nice.
I met ___ woman yesterday
- (5) I was looking for a MacBook air and an iPhone.
I found _____ computer but I couldn't find _____ telephone
- (6) Speaker A and Speaker B have a dog. The dog is outside, in the garden, and it is barking.
Speaker A says:
I must feed _____ dog

A bare noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties:

- (i) lacks an "**article**" <glossary link> or a **demonstrative**<glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...) exhibits no **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular count noun, or
 - (b) a definite plural noun

Additional instructions

- The definite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - proper names (*the teacher saw **John**, I visited **London***)
 - kinship nouns (*John called **mom***)
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)

- collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week*)
- singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
- singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
- *home*

Examples

1.

Mandarin is “yes” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position can be bare (Cheng & Sybesma 1999: 510 ex 1b).

- (i) Hufei he-wan-le tang
 Hufei drink-finish-LE soup
Hufei finished the soup

2.

Russian is “yes” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position can be bare. A singular count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
 I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met the dog (can also mean I met a dog)
- (b) ja pročitala knigu
 I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read the book (can also mean I read a book)
- (c) ja vstretil učitelja
 I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met the teacher (can also mean I met a teacher)

3.

English is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
 * I called girl
- (b) Context: *There was a book and a pen on the table.*
 *he took book, but he left pen

They must have the definite article ‘the’.

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
 I called the girl
- (b) Context: *There was a book and a pen on the table.*
 he took the book, but left the pen

4.

Rumanian is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) * am întâlnit profesor
 have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC. PRES meet.PST.PRT professor
 intended: *I've met the teacher*

The definite article *-ul* is obligatory.

- (ii) am întâlnit profesor**ul**
 have-AUX.3.SG.INDIC. PRES meet.PST.PRT teacher.THE.M.SG

I've met the teacher

5.

Basque is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) * irakasle topatu nuen
teacher found 1.AUX.PAST
intended: *I met the teacher*

The “article” *a* (ii.a), or a demonstrative (ii.b), is obligatory.

- (ii) (a) irakaslea topatu nuen
teacher.A found 1.AUX.PAST
I met the teacher
(b) irakasle hau topatu nuen
teacher this found 1.AUX.PAST
I met this teacher

6.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) (a) *gis na-a xaj
see FIN-1S dog
intended: *I saw the dog*
(b) *jàng na-a téére
read FIN-1S book
I read the book

A definite article (-i), preceded by a noun class agreement marker (Ncl), is obligatory (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann, 2012)

- (ii) (a) gis na-a xaj b-i
see FIN-1S dog Ncl-DEF
I saw the dog
(b) jàng na-a téére b-i
read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the book

7.

Cantonese is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) * gaa ce zo-zyu ceot hau
CL car block-CONT exit
intended: *The car is blocking the exit*

They require a classifier (CL) (Cheng & Sybersma 1999: 521, ex 19a).

- (ii) gaa ce zo-zyu go ceot hau
CL car block-CONT CL exit
The car is blocking the exit

w04b_.

Definite singular count nouns in object position must have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> singular count <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> must:

- (i) occur with an **"article"** <glossary link> or a **demonstrative**<glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...) exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular count noun, and/or
 - (b) a definite plural noun

Elicitation context

I met two boys and a girl. I called ___ girl

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) A book and a pen were on the table.
I took ___ book, but I left ___ pen
- (2) Yesterday the sky was clear...
we watched _____ moon through a telescope
- (3) *Please, clean _____ bathroom before you leave*
- (4) My new neighbors are nice.
I met ___ woman yesterday
- (5) I was looking for a MacBook air and an iPhone.
I found _____ computer but I couldn't find _____ telephone
- (6) Speaker A and Speaker B have a dog. The dog is outside, in the garden, and it is barking.
Speaker A says:
I must feed _____ dog

Additional instructions

- The definite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - proper names (*the teacher saw **John**, I visited **London***)
 - kinship nouns (*John called **mom***)
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

English is "yes" for this property. Definite count singular nouns in object position must have an article ('the').

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
I called the girl
- (b) Context: *There was a book and a pen on the table*
he took the book, but he left the pen

A bare noun is excluded with definite singular count objects.

- (ii) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
* I called girl
- (b) Context: *There was a book and a pen on the table*
*he took book, but left pen

2.

Rumanian is “yes” for this property. Definite count singular nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) am întâlnit profesor**ul**
have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT teacher.THE.M.SG
I've met the teacher

A bare noun is excluded with definite singular count objects.

- (ii) * am întâlnit profesor
have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC. PRES meet.PST.PRT professor
intended: *I've met the teacher*

3.

Basque is “yes” for this property. Definite count singular nouns in object position must have an article (i.a), or or a demonstrative (i.b).

- (i) (a) irakaslea topatu nuen
teacher.A found 1.AUX.PAST
I met the teacher
- (b) irakasle hau topatu nuen
teacher this found 1.AUX.PAST
I met this teacher

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) * irakasle topatu nuen
teacher found 1.AUX.PAST
intended: *I met the teacher*

4.

Wolof is “yes” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position must have an article: the definite article (-i), preceded by a noun class agreement marker, is obligatory with definite singular count noun objects (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann, 2012)

- (i) (a) gis na-a xaj b-i
see FIN-1S dog Ncl-DEF
I saw the dog
- (b) jàng na-a téére b-i
read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the book

Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare

- (ii) (a) *gis na-a xaj
see FIN-1S dog
intended: *I saw the dog*
(b) *jàng na-a téere
read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the book

5.

Cantonese is “yes” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position must have a classifier (CL).

- (i) gaa ce zo-zyu go ceot hau
CL car block-CONT CL exit
The car is blocking the exit

They cannot be bare (Cheng & Sybersma 1999: 521, ex. 19a).

- (ii) *gaa ce zo-zyu ceot hau
CL car block-CONT exit
intended: *The car is blocking the exit*

6.

Akan is “no” for this property. Definite non familiar singular count nouns can be bare.

- (i) Kòfí á-fa tám
Kofi PFV-take cloth
Kofi has taken the cloth

Comment. “Familiar” definite singular count nouns in object position require a visible article (Arkoh and Matthewson 2013; “the referent of a noun phrase is familiar if at the time of the utterance the speakers takes the existence of the referent to already be present in the common ground of the discourse”, 5; example 20b pag. 8).

- (ii) Kòfí á-fa tám nɔ
Kofi PFV-take cloth FAM
Kofi has taken the cloth

7.

Mandarin is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position can be bare (Cheng & Sybesma 1999: 510 ex 1b).

- (i) Hufei he-wan-le tang
Hufei drink-finish-LE soup
Hufei finished the soup

8.

Russian is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position can be bare. A singular count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met the dog (can also mean I met a dog)

- (b) ja pročitala knigu
I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read the book (can also mean *I read a book*)
- (c) ja vstretil učitelja
I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met the teacher (can also mean *I met a teacher*)

w04c_

Definite singular count nouns in object position can have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an unmodified **definite**<glossary link> singular **count** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> can (but do not have to):

- (i) occur with an "article" <glossary link> or a **demonstrative**<glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...) exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular count noun, and/or
 - (b) a definite plural noun

Elicitation context

I met two boys and a girl. I called ___ girl

More contexts<popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) A book and a pen were on the table.
I took ___ book, but I left ___ pen
- (2) Yesterday the sky was clear...
we watched _____ moon through a telescope
- (3) *Please, clean _____ bathroom before you leave*
- (4) My new neighbors are nice.
I met ___ woman yesterday
- (5) I was looking for a MacBook air and an iPhone.
I found _____ computer but I couldn't find _____ telephone
- (6) Speaker A and Speaker B have a dog. The dog is outside, in the garden, and it is barking.
Speaker A says:
I must feed _____ dog

Additional instructions

- The definite singular count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - proper names (*the teacher saw **John**, I visited **London***)
 - kinship nouns (*John called **mom***)
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week*)
 - singular nouns of chemical elements or other physical entities (*I put **oxygen** in the tank*)
 - singular nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **chemistry***)
 - *home*

Examples

1.

Akan is "yes" for this property. Count singular nouns in object position require a visible article when their referent is "familiar" (Arkoh and Matthewson 2013; "the referent of a noun phrase is familiar if at

the time of the utterance the speakers takes the existence of the referent to already be present in the common ground of the discourse”, 5).

- (i) Kòffí á-fa tám nɔ
 Kofi PFV-take cloth FAM
Kofi has taken the cloth

Non-familiar definite nouns can be bare (Arkoh and Matthewson 2013: 8, ex 20b).

2.

English is "no" for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
 * I called girl
 (b) Context: *There was a book and a pen on the table.*
 *he took book, but he left pen

The definite article "the" is obligatory.

- (ii) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
 I called the girl
 (b) Context: *There was a book and a pen on the table.*
 he took the book, but left the pen

3.

Rumanian is "no" for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) * am întâlnit profesor
 have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT professor
 intended: *I've met the teacher*

The definite article *-ul* is obligatory.

- (ii) am întâlnit profesor**ul**
 have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC. PRES meet.PST.PRT teacher.THE.M.SG
I've met the teacher

4.

Basque is "no" for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) * irakasle topatu nuen
 teacher found 1.AUX.PAST
 intended: *I met the teacher*

The "article" *a* (ii.a), or a demonstrative (ii.b), is obligatory.

- (ii) (a) irakaslea topatu nuen
 teacher.A found 1.AUX.PAST
I met the teacher
 (b) irakasle hau topatu nuen
 teacher this found 1.AUX.PAST
I met this teacher

5.

Wolof is "no" for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) (a) *gis na-a xaj
 see FIN-1S dog
 intended: *I saw the dog*
 (b) *jàng na-a téére
 read FIN-1S book
I read the book

A definite article (-i), preceded by a noun class agreement marker, is obligatory with definite singular count noun objects (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann, 2012)

- (ii) (a) gis na-a xaj b-i
 see FIN-1S dog Ncl-DEF
I saw the dog
 (b) jàng na-a téére b-i
 read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the book

6.

Cantonese is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) *gaa ce zo-zyu ceot hau
 CL car block-CONT exit
 intended: *The car is blocking the exit*

They require a classifier (CL) (Cheng & Sybersma 1999: 521, ex 19a).

- (ii) gaa ce zo-zyu go ceot hau
 CL car block-CONT CL exit
The car is blocking the exit

7.

Russian is “no” for this property. Definite singular count nouns in object position never require an article. A singular count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) ja vstretila sobaku
 I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.SG
I met the dog (can also mean I met a dog)
 (b) ja pročitala knigu
 I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.SG
I read the book (can also mean I read a book)
 (c) ja vstretil učitelja
 I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.SG
I met the teacher (can also mean I met a teacher)

Indefinite plural count nouns in object position

To code for all possibilities, and for ease of the task, there are three property definitions for indefinite plural count nouns in object position:
can be bare, must have an article, can have an article

w05a_

Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be *bare*

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified<glossary link> indefinite<glossary link> plural <glossary link> count noun in object position <glossary link>** can be "bare".

A bare noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties,

- (i) lacks an "article" (e.g. a 'partitive' article, like English *of+art*, French *de+art*, Italian *di+art*, etc)
- (ii) (*for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...*) exhibits no **structural<glossary link>** alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular count noun, or
 - (b) a definite plural noun

Elicitation context

- (i) *Yesterday I bought ___ books* (first mention of *books*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)
- (ii) *Yesterday I met ___ students* (first mention of *students*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)
- (iii) *Yesterday I saw ___ dogs in my garden* (first mention of *dogs*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)

Additional instructions

- The indefinite plural count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - plural nouns used as generics (*I like **dogs***)
 - *pluralia tantum* (*I wear **glasses***)
 - plural nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **mathematics***)
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)

Examples

1.

English is "yes" for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) I met dogs
- (ii) I read books
- (iii) I met teachers

2.

Hebrew is "yes" for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) karati sfarim
I.read book.PL
I read books
- (ii) raiti klavim

I.saw dog.PL
I saw dogs

3.

Hindi is “yes” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

(i) māīne kitaabē padhii **(the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D)**
I.ERG book.PL read.PST.FEM
I read books

4.

Hungarian is “yes” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

(i) olvastam könyveket
read.1SG book.PL.ACC
I read books

(ii) láttam kutyákat
see.PST.1SG dog.PL.ACC
I see dogs

5.

Modern Greek is “yes” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

(i) diávasa biblíá
read.PAST.3SG book.PL
I read books

6.

Russian is “yes” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare. A plural count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

(i) (a) ja vstretila sobak
I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.PL
I met (some) dogs (can also mean I met the dogs)
(b) ja čital(a) knigi
I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.PL
I read (some) books (can also mean I read the books)
(c) j avstretil učitel'ej
I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.PL
I met (some) teachers (can also mean I met the teachers)

7.

French is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

(i) (a) *J'ai lu livres
I have read book.PL
Intended: *I read books*
(b) *J'ai rencontré enseignants
I have met teacher.PL
Intended: *I met teachers*

The ‘partitive’ article *des* (= preposition *de* + article *les*) is required°.

- (ii) (a) J'ai lu des livres
 I have read of.the.PL book.PL
I read books
- (b) J'ai rencontré des enseignants
 I have met of.the.PL teacher.PL
I met teachers

° In other languages this may show up as genitive or partitive case (as opposed to accusative case).

8.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) *irakaslek topatu nituen
 teacher.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
 Intended: *I met teachers*

They require the ‘article’ *-a* along with the plural marker *-k*.

- (ii) irakasleak topatu nituen
 teacher.A.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met teachers (can also mean *I met the teachers*)

9.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) *jàng na-a tééré
 read FIN-1S book
 Intended: *I read books*

They always occur with an indefinite plural marker (cf. also Tamba, Torrence and Zimmermann 2013).

- (ii) jàng na-a a-y tééré
 read FIN-1S indef-PL book
I read books

w05b_

Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **indefinite**<glossary link> **plural** <glossary link> noun in **object position** <glossary link> must:

- (i) occur with an "article" (e.g. a 'partitive' article, like English *of+art*, French *de+art*, Italian *di+art*, etc)
- (ii) (*for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...*) exhibits **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular count noun, or
 - (b) a definite plural noun.

Elicitation context

- (i) *Yesterday I bought ____ books* (first mention of *books*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)
- (ii) *Yesterday I met ____ students* (first mention of *students*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)
- (iii) *Yesterday I saw ____ dogs in my garden* (first mention of *dogs*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)

Additional instructions

- The indefinite plural count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - plural nouns used as generics (*I like **dogs***)
 - *pluralia tantum* (*I wear **glasses***)
 - plural nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **mathematics***)
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)

Examples

1.

French is "yes" for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have the 'partitive' article *des* (= preposition *de* + article *les*; i.a, ii.a)^o.

- (i) (a) J'ai lu des livres
I have read of.the.PL book.PL
I read books
- (b) J'ai rencontré des enseignants
I have met of.the.PL teacher.PL
I met teachers

Bare plural nouns are not allowed in object position.

- (ii) (a) *J'ai lu livres
I have read book.PL
Intended: *I read books*
- (b) *J'ai rencontré enseignants
I have met teacher.PL
Intended: *I met teachers*

^o In other languages this may show up as genitive or partitive case (as opposed to accusative case).

2.

Basque is “yes” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) irakasleak topatu nituen
teacher.A.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met teachers (as well as *I met the teachers*)

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) *irakaslek topatu nituen
teacher.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
Intended: *I met teachers*

3.

Wolof is “yes” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) jàng na-a a-y tééré
read FIN-1S indef-PL book
I read books

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) *jàng na-a tééré
read FIN-1S book
Intended: *I read books*

4.

English is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) I met dogs
(ii) I read books
(iii) I met teachers

5.

Modern Greek is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) diávasa biblía
read.PAST.3SG book.PL
I read books

6.

Hindi is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) māñe kitaabē padhii (**the d has a dot below. Html code: U+1E0D**)
I.ERG book.PL read.PST.fem
I read books

7.

Hungarian is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) olvastam könyveket
read.1SG book.PL.ACC
I read books

- (ii) láttam kutyákat
see.PST.1SG dog.PL.ACC
I see dogs

8.

Hebrew is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) karati sfarim
I.read book.PL
I read books

- (ii) raiti klavim
I.saw dog.PL
I saw dogs

9.

Russian is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can be bare. A plural count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) (a) ja vstretila sobak
I meet.PST.FEM.SG dog.ACC.PL
I met dogs (can also mean I met the dogs)
- (b) ja čital(a) knigi
I read.PST.FEM.SG book.ACC.PL
I read books (can also mean I read the books)
- (c) j avstretil učitel'ej
I meet.PST.MASC.SG teacher.ACC.PL
I met teachers (can also mean I met the teachers)

w05c.

Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **indefinite**<glossary link> plural count <glossary link> noun in **object** <glossary link> position may:

- (i) occur with an "article" (e.g. a 'partitive' article, like English *of+art*, French *de+art*, Italian *di+art*, etc)
- (ii) (*for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...*) exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite singular count noun, or
 - (b) a definite plural noun.

Elicitation context

- (i) *Yesterday I bought ____ books* (first mention of *books*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)
- (ii) *Yesterday I met ____ students* (first mention of *students*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)
- (iii) *Yesterday I saw ____ dogs in my garden* (first mention of *dogs*, plural, non-specific, non-generic)

Additional instructions

- The indefinite plural count noun must be unmodified (**no quantifiers**, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - plural nouns used as generics (*I like **dogs***)
 - *pluralia tantum* (*I wear **glasses***)
 - plural nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **mathematics***)
 - abstract nouns (*John finds **love** everywhere*)
 - collective nouns (*Italy changed **government** last week, I saw **people** at the party*)

Examples

1.

Italian is "yes" for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position can either be bare (i.a) or occur with the 'partitive' article *dei/degli/delle* (i.b)

- (i) (a) ho incontrato studenti per tutto il pomeriggio
I.have met student.M.PL for all.M.S the.M.S afternoon.M.S
I met students all afternoon long
- (b) ho incontrato degli studenti alla festa
I.have met of.the.M.PL student.M.PL at.the.F.S party.F.S
I met students at the party

2.

Russian is "yes" for this property.

Indefinite plural count nouns in object can have partitive case (PRT), which counts as an article (i.a), or the accusative case, which counts as bare (i.b).

- (i) (a) Ja kupila knig-ø
I.NOM buy.SG.FEM.PST book-PL.PART
I bought (some) books
- (b) Ja kupila knig.I
I.NOM buy.SG.FEM.PST book.PL.ACC
I bought books

3.

English is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position are bare.

(i) I met students all afternoon long

Indefinite plural count nouns in object position may occur with the quantifier *some*, that does not display any ‘article-like’ properties (as for instance opposed to French *des* or Italian *dei/degli/delle*, that actually contain a definite article; Kayne 2008).

(ii) I met some students

4.

French is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) (a) J’ai lu des livres
I have read of.the.PL book.PL
I read books
- (b) J’ai rencontré des enseignants
I have met of.the.PL teacher.PL
I met teachers

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) *J’ai lu livres
I have read book.PL
Intended: *I read books*
- (b) *J’ai rencontré enseignants
I have met teacher.PL
Intended: *I met teachers*

5.

Basque is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) irakasleak topatu nituen
teacher.A.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met teachers (can also mean I met the teachers)

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) *irakaslek topatu nituen
teacher.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
Intended: *I met teachers*

6.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Indefinite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) jàng na-a a-y tééré
read FIN-1S indef-PL book
I read books

They cannot be bare.

(ii) *jàng na-a tééré
read FIN-1S book
Intended: *I read books*

Definite plural count nouns in object position

To code for all possibilities, and for ease of the task, there are three property definitions for definite plural count nouns in object position:
can be bare, must have an article, can have an article

w06a_

Definite plural count nouns in object position can be *bare*

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> **plural** <glossary link> count noun in **object position** <glossary link> can be "bare" at least in the following context:

I met two boys and a girl. I called ___ boys

More contexts <popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) (a) Two books and some pens were on the table.
I took ___ books, but I left ___ pens
(b) There were elephants and giraffes at the zoo.
I saw ___ elephants but I couldn't find ___ giraffes
- (2) (a) Yesterday I went to a concert.
I met ___ musicians after their performance
(b) *The referee wanted to see _____ players before the game started.*
- (3) I was looking for two MacBook air and three iPhone.
I found ___ computers but I couldn't find ___ telephones
- (4) Speaker A and Speaker B have two dogs. The dogs are outside, in the garden, and are barking.
Speaker A says:
I must feed _____ dogs

A bare noun phrase, for the purposes of this set of properties:

- (i) lacks an "**article**" <glossary link> or a **demonstrative**<glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without articles but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings, ...) exhibits no **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite plural noun, or
 - (b) a definite singular count noun

Additional instructions

- The definite plural count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - plural nouns used as generics (*I like **dogs***)
 - *pluralia tantum* (*I wear **glasses***)
 - plural nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **mathematics***)

Examples

1.

Russian is “yes” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position can be bare. A plural count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) ja čital(a) knigi
I.NOM read(FEM) book.PL.ACC
I read the books (can also mean I read books)

2.

Samoan is “yes” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) ?au'mai 'maile
get.IMP dogs
get the dogs

3.

English is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
* I called boys
(b) Context: *There were two books and three pens on the table.*
*he took books, but he left pens

The definite article “the” is obligatory.

- (ii) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
I called the boys
(b) Context: *There were two books and three pens on the table.*
he took the books, but left the pens

4.

Rumanian is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) * am întâlnit profesori
have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT professor.PL
intended: *I've met the teachers*

A definite article (-i) is obligatory.

- (ii) am întâlnit profesorii
have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT teacher.ART.M.PL
I've met the teachers

5.

Basque is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) *irakaslek topatu nituen
teacher.PL found .PL.AUX.PAST
Intended: *I met the teachers*

They must have the plural ‘article’ (-ak) or a demonstrative.

- (ii) (a) irakasle**ak** topatu nituen
 teacher.A.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met the teachers
- (b) irakasle hauek topatu nituen
 teacher that.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met those teachers

6.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) (a) *gis na-a xaj
 see FIN-1S dog
 Intended: *I saw the dogs*
- (b) *jàng na-a téére
 read FIN-1S book
 Intended: *I read the books*

A definite article (-i), preceded by a noun class agreement marker (Ncl) is obligatory (cf. Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann, 2012)

- (ii) (a) gis na-a xaj y-i
 see FIN-1S dog Ncl-DEF
I saw the dogs
- (b) jàng na-a téére y-i
 read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the books

w06b.

Definite plural count nouns in object position must have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> **plural** <glossary link> count noun in **object position** <glossary link> must:

- (i) occur with an **"article"** <glossary link> or a **demonstrative**<glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without a definite article but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings,...)
exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite plural noun, and/or
 - (b) a definite singular count noun

Elicitation context

I met two boys and a girl. I called ___ boys

More contexts <popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) (a) Two books and some pens were on the table.
I took ___ books, but I left ___ pens
(c) There were elephants and giraffes at the zoo.
I saw ___ elephants but I couldn't find ___ giraffes
- (2) (a) Yesterday I went to a concert.
I met ___ musicians after their performance
(b) *The referee wanted to see ___ players before the game started.*
- (3) I was looking for two MacBook air and three iPhone.
I found ___ computers but I couldn't find ___ telephones
- (4) Speaker A and Speaker B have two dogs. The dogs are outside, in the garden, and are barking.
Speaker A says:
I must feed ___ dogs

Additional instructions

- The definite plural count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - plural nouns used as generics (*I like **dogs***)
 - *pluralia tantum* (*I wear **glasses***)
 - plural nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **mathematics***)

Examples

1.

English is "yes" for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
I called the boys
- (b) Context: *There were three books and two pens on the table.*
he took the books, but left the pens

A bare noun is ungrammatical.

- (ii) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
 * I called boys
 (b) Context: *There were three books and two pens on the table.*
 *he took books, but he left pens

2.

Rumanian is “yes” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have an article (the enclitic article *-i*).

- (i) am întâlnit profesorii
 have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT teacher.ART.M.PL
I've met the teacher

A bare noun is excluded.

- (ii) * am întâlnit profesori
 have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT professor.PL
 intended: *I've met the teachers*

3.

Basque is “yes” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have the “article” *ak* (i.a) or a demonstrative (i.b).

- (i) (a) irakasle**ak** topatu nituen
 teacher.A.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met the teachers
 (b) irakasle hauek topatu nituen
 teacher that.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met those teachers

A bare noun is excluded.

- (ii) *irakaslek topatu nituen
 teacher.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
 sIntended: *I met the teachers*

4.

Wolof is “yes” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have the article *-i*, preceded by a noun class agreement marker (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann, 2012)

- (i) (a) Gis na-a xaj y-i
 see FIN-1S dog Ncl-DEF
I saw the dogs
 (b) jàng na-a téére y-i
 read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the books

They cannot be bare.

- (ii) (a) *gis na-a xaj
 see FIN-1S dog
 intended: *I saw the dogs*

- (b) *jàng na-a téére
read FIN-1S book
Intended: *I read the books*

5.

Russian is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position can be bare. A plural count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

- (i) ja čital(a) knigi
I.NOM read(FEM) book.PL.ACC
I read the books (can also mean *I read books*)

6.

Samoan is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position can be bare.

- (i) ?au'mai 'maile
get.IMP dogs
get the dogs

w06c_

Definite plural count nouns in object position can have an article

This property is set to "yes" if an **unmodified**<glossary link> **definite**<glossary link> **plural** <glossary link> count noun in **object position** <glossary link> can:

- (i) occur with an "article" <glossary link> or a **demonstrative**<glossary link>
- (ii) (for languages without a definite article but with classifiers, noun classes, case, adpositional endings,...)
exhibit **structural**<glossary link> alternation with noun phrases containing:
 - (a) an indefinite plural noun, and/or
 - (b) a definite singular count noun

Elicitation context

I met two boys and a girl. I called ___ boys

More contexts <popup window>

POPUP WINDOW

Additional contexts to check this property

- (1) (a) Two books and some pens were on the table.
I took ___ books, but I left ___ pens
(c) There were elephants and giraffes at the zoo.
I saw ___ elephants but I couldn't find ___ giraffes
- (2) (a) Yesterday I went to a concert.
I met ___ musicians after their performance
(b) *The referee wanted to see _____ players before the game started.*
- (3) I was looking for two MacBook air and three iPhone.
I found ___ computers but I couldn't find ___ telephones
- (4) Speaker A and Speaker B have two dogs. The dogs are outside, in the garden, and are barking.
Speaker A says:
I must feed ___ dogs

Additional instructions

- The definite plural count noun must be unmodified (no quantifiers, no adjectives, no possessors, no relative clauses, no adpositional complements ...)
- The sentence is affirmative, NOT negative, interrogative, ...
- The following classes of nouns should NOT be considered when checking this property:
 - plural nouns used as generics (*I like **dogs***)
 - *pluralia tantum* (*I wear **glasses***)
 - plural nouns of arts and sciences (*I love **mathematics***)

Examples

No known cases of "yes", yet.

1.

English is "no" for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have an article.

- (i) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
I called the boys

- (b) Context: *There were three books and two pens on the table.*
he took the books, but left the pens

A bare noun is excluded.

- (ii) (a) Context: *I met two boys and a girl.*
* I called boys
(b) Context: *There were three books and two pens on the table.*
*he took books, but he left pens

2.

Rumanian is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have an article (the enclitic article *-i*).

- (i) am întâlnit profesorii
have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT teacher.ART.M.PL
I've met the teacher

A bare noun is excluded.

- (ii) * am întâlnit profesori
have.AUX.3.SG.INDIC.PRES meet.PST.PRT professor
intended: *I've met the teachers*

3.

Basque is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position cannot be bare.

- (i) *irakaslek topatu nituen
teacher.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
Intended: *I met the teachers*

The “article” *ak* as in (ii.a) , or a demonstrative, as in (ii.b), is obligatory.

- (ii) (a) irakasle**ak** topatu nituen
teacher.A.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met the teachers
(b) irakasle hauek topatu nituen
teacher that.PL found 1.PL.AUX.PAST
I met those teachers

4.

Wolof is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position must have the definite article *-i*, preceded by a plural noun class agreement marker.

- (i) (a) Gis na-a xaj y-i
see FIN-1S dog Ncl-DEF
I saw the dogs
(b) jàng na-a téére y-i
read FIN-1S book Ncl-DEF
I read the books

A bare noun is excluded (Tamba, Torrence, Zimmermann, 2012)

- (ii) (a) * jàng na-a téére
read FIN-1S book

Intended: *I read the books*
(b) *gis na-a xaj
see FIN-1S dog
intended: *I saw the dogs*

5.

Russian is “no” for this property. Definite plural count nouns in object position are bare. A plural count noun with accusative case is compatible to both an indefinite and a definite interpretation, thus counting as “bare”.

(i) ja čital(a) knigi
I.NOM read(FEM) book.PL.ACC
I read the books (can also mean *I read books*)